

REMARKS

Favorable consideration and allowance are respectfully requested for claims 12, 13, 15-21, 23, and 28-30 in view of the following remarks.

Status of the Application

Claims 12, 13, 15-21, 23, and 28-30 are pending in this application. Claims 1-11 and 24-26 were previously canceled. Claims 12-16, 21-23, 27-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,530,847 to Schieve *et al.* (the “Schieve patent”). Claims 17-20 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Claims 14, 22, and 27 have been canceled by way of the present amendment. Claims 12, 15, 17-21, 23, and 28 have been amended.

Objection to Claims 17-20

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 17-20. In response, these claims have been rewritten into independent form. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are in condition for allowance.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

According to the Examiner, the Schieve patent renders obvious the subject matter of claims 12, 13, 21, and 23. Although the Office Action nominally rejected claims 14-16, 22, and 27-30, no specific discussion of the Schieve patent was presented with respect to these claims. As a result, Applicants respectfully submit that each of those claims contains allowable subject matter.

Based on the following changes to the claims, Applicants respectfully assert that the rejection of claims 12, 13, 21, and 23 is moot and, therefore, the application is in condition for allowance:

- Claim 12 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 14;
- Claim 14 has been cancelled;
- Claim 15 has been rewritten into independent form;
- Claim 21 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 22;
- Claim 22 has been cancelled;
- Claim 23 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 27;
- Claim 27 has been cancelled; and
- Claim 28 has been amended so that it depends from claim 23.

* * * * *

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #010408.52554US).

Respectfully submitted,

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